

ALLENIA, NEW GENUS.

By

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Allenia Phillips gen. nov. ab *Hibiscus* Linn. stylo capitato differt.

Bracteolae 12, lineares, basi connatae. *Tubus calyci* campanulatus, villosus; lobi ovati. *Petala* oblonga, basi columna staminea adnata. *Columna staminea* supra filamenta $\propto$ exserens. *Ovarium* 5-loculare, loculis 3—4-ovulatis; stylus apice capitatus. *Capsula* 5-valvata. *Semina* glabra.

Herba procumbens, villosa; folia petiolata, ovata, basi cordata; flores axillares, 2—4-nati.

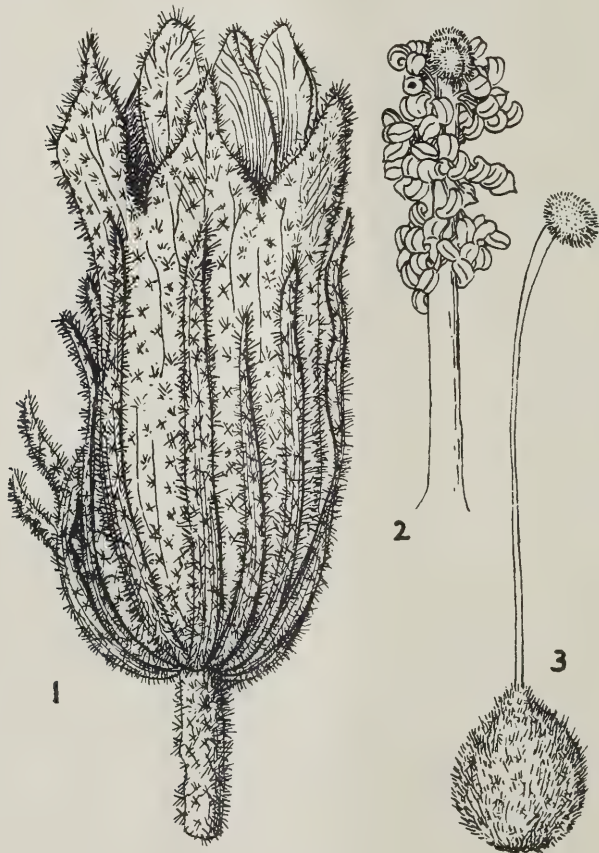
Type: *A. urens* (Linn. f.) Phill. = *Hibiscus urens* Linn. f.

Allenia urens (Linn. f.) Phill. *Epicalyx* of 12 linear tomentose lobes connate at the base to form a shallow basin; lobes 2 cm. long, veined. *Calyx-tube* campanulate, 2 cm. long, 1·8 cm. diameter above, densely tomentose; lobes shorter than the tube, ovate. *Petals* 2—4 cm. long, 8 mm. broad, oblong, obtuse, veined, adnate at the base to the staminal-column, tomentose without. *Staminal-column* 2 cm. long, broadened at the base, bearing many anthers on free filaments on the upper half; filaments terete, slightly shorter than the anthers; anthers reddish, horse-shoe shaped after dehiscence, 2-theous. *Ovary* sub-globose, deeply 5-lobed, 5-chambered, with several axile ovules in each chamber, densely tomentose; style terete, as long as the staminal-column; stigma capitate, divided into 5 fleshy cushions which are pubescent. *Fruit* a 5-valved capsule. *Seed* glabrous; embryo straight; cotyledons flat, elliptic; endosperm copious.

A procumbent herb with the stems radiating and up to 1·2 m. long and with the leaves and flowers vertical, the whole plant densely stellately tomentose with stinging hairs; leaves petioled; lamina 2·5—9·5 cm. long, 2·5—12 cm. broad, ovate or sub-orbicular, cordate at the base, prominently veined beneath, rugose above; petiole 4—12 cm. long; flowers a deep claret-red, large, axillary, 2—4-nate.

The species is apparently confined to the dry semi-Karoo area roughly

bounded by the Bloemhof district in the north, through Fauresmith and the Luckhoff district to Graaff-Reinet and then westwards through de Aar, Williston, Namaqualand and Bushmanland to South-West Africa.



Allenia urens. 1. Single flower. 2. Staminal-column with anthers and apex of style projecting. 3. Gynaecium (note the globose capitate stigma.)

The plant is commonly known as the "wilde pampoen" or "wild pumpkin" and it is interesting to note that Burchell named it *Hibiscus ucurbitinus*. When dry it has a disagreeable odour.

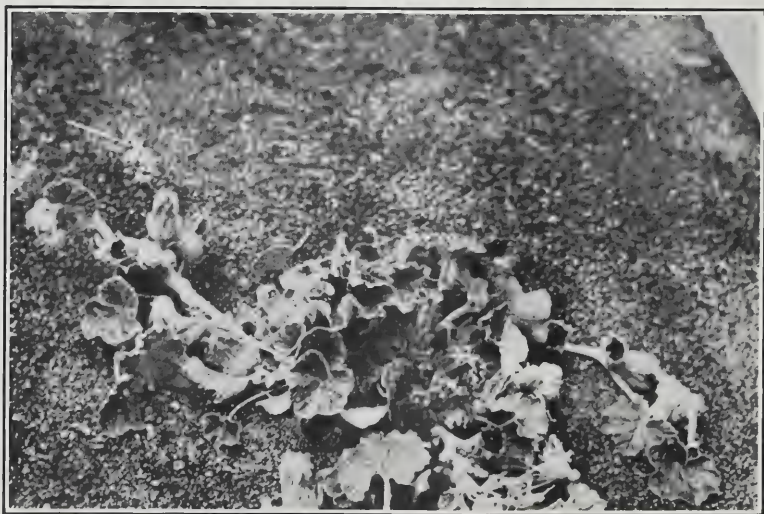


PLATE III. *Allenia urens*. (Above) Portions of plant, showing the binate flowers.
(Below) Wild plant, showing habit. Photographs by J. A. van Zijl, October, 1943.

An examination of the genus *Hibiscus* which the writer undertook in connection with a revision of "The Genera of South African Plants" convinced him that the plant named *Hibiscus urens* Linn. f. differed from the other South African species of *Hibiscus* and that it could not be retained in that genus. Dr. M. Henrici and Miss I. C. Verdoorn recently collected some excellent spirit material while on a collecting trip in the Luckhoff district which supplemented the herbarium specimens. The main characters which separate the plant from *Hibiscus* are the capitate stigma and the location of the anthers on the upper portion of the staminal-column. The genus is named in honour of Dr. Robert Allen Dyer of the Division of Botany and Plant Pathology, author of many botanical publications and co-author of "The Succulent Euphorbieae."